



FEANTSA Flash  
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For upcoming events and conferences, do not forget to visit the FEANTSA [Calendar of events!](#)

## FEANTSA News

► **2011 Round of Population and Housing Censuses: FEANTSA recommendations for the enumeration of homeless people on census night** [28/11/2008]

The Data collection group of FEANTSA has carried out an initial stocktaking of intentions and methodologies to be used in 2011 to enumerate homeless people. In 2011, all countries will carry out a population and housing census which will cover the whole population; including people experiencing homelessness (the EU adopted a regulation on this). This FEANTSA stocktaking examines the enumeration of housing arrangements in the census, and methods to be used for the enumeration of people who are homeless on census night in different EU countries, while the last section formulates general recommendations.

The Data collection group will continue monitoring preparations for 2011, and would like to invite Eurostat to organise a preparatory meeting on hard-to-count groups in order to allow national statistics offices to exchange ideas and methodologies on the enumeration of people who are homeless.

[FEANTSA's stocktaking of intentions and methodologies.](#)

[See the EU regulation on the 2011 population and housing census.](#)

► **FEANTSA evaluation of the National Strategic Reports 2008-2010 on Social Protection and Social Inclusion** [28/11/2008]

In October 2008, all EU countries submitted national reports on their social policies to the European Commission. These reports are referred to as a National Strategic Reports (NSR) on social protection and social inclusion. They all contain a national action plan on social inclusion which provides updates on policies to tackle poverty, including initiatives to tackle homelessness between 2008 and 2010.

These reports are submitted every 2 years. FEANTSA has published a paper which evaluates the 2008-2010 reports from a homelessness perspective. This paper does not aim to evaluate national homeless policies since the NSRs do not contain in depth information on such policies (lack of information on funding, lack of data on homelessness). Rather, this FEANTSA paper assesses the weight of homelessness in the 2008-2010 round of national reporting by highlighting the homeless policies, data, targets and good practices in the NSRs. The paper also draws conclusions from this analysis, and proposes key actions at EU level to build on the content of the 2008-2010 round of NSRs and use the full potential of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in the area of homelessness.

[See all the National Strategic Reports \(NSR\) on social protection and social inclusion.](#)

[FEANTSA's page on the EU Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion.](#)

► **FEANTSA's Annual Conference a success**[28/11/2008]

FEANTSA's Annual Conference which took place in Cardiff, on 13-14 November attracted more than 300 participants from 23 EU countries. The two days spent in the capital city of Wales gave great opportunities for exchanging information, ideas and good practice. Participants were especially happy to learn about new perspectives from other European countries and to build on their network of contacts.

FEANTSA would like to thank all speakers and participants that took part in this event to make it such a successful one.

Topics explored at the conference such as social housing, the role of private landlords, the importance of housing advice etc will be further developed in the next edition of FEANTSA's magazine, Homeless in Europe, coming out at the end of this year.

Please visit the FEANTSA website to download [presentations from the conference.](#)

► **Housing Rights Watch Launched!**[28/11/2008]

Housing Rights Watch was launched at FEANTSA's Annual European Conference which took place in Cardiff, 13-14 November.

Housing Rights Watch is a European network of interdisciplinary groups of associations, lawyers and academics from different countries, who are committed to promoting the right to housing for all.

For more information, please visit FEANTSA's webpage: <http://feantsa.horus.be/code/EN/pg.asp?Page=1126>

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► **New FEANTSA members!**[28/11/2008]

We are delighted to announce that two new members have recently joined FEANTSA. They are:

Overføstergården, Denmark  
UNAFO, France

We would like to wish them a warm welcome to FEANTSA. More information on these organisations, plus their contact details can be found on the [FEANTSA website](#).

## News from the European Union

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► **Eurostat survey reveals many EU citizens still at risk of poverty**[28/11/2008]

In 2003, some 72 million people in the EU were found to be at risk of poverty (which accounted for almost 16% of the population). The highest figure of those at risk of poverty in member state countries were found in Greece, Slovakia and Ireland (21%), while Luxembourg (10%), and Slovenia (10%) and the Czech Republic (8%) presented the lowest figures.

In 2005, almost 10% of children aged up to 17 years old were found to be living in jobless households. The UK (over 15%) had the highest recorded figure, followed by Slovakia. As far as adults between 18-59 years old and living in jobless households are concerned, Poland has the highest figure (15%), followed by Belgium and Hungary (between 10-15%).

Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, measures inequalities between the poor and rich by calculating the 20% total income gained by the 20% of the population with the highest income in relation to that gained by the 20% of the population with the lowest income. Turkey has the highest inequality ratio, as measured in 2004, followed by Portugal, Latvia, Greece and Estonia. The Nordic Member States, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia reported the lowest inequality ratios in 2003.

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► **Monitoring progress towards the objectives of the European Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion**[28/11/2008]

The Commission Staff Working Document on monitoring progress presents an analysis of the social situation in Member States regarding the objectives of the EU Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion. It reviews the full set of indicators developed and agreed by the Member States in the context of this strategy.

Due to lack of data, the report does not cover progress made to tackle homelessness stating that: "...household surveys do not cover persons living in collective households, homeless persons or other difficult-to-reach groups". However, there are many countries that have or are developing data collection methodologies to create effective and evidence-based policies to tackle homelessness, with the support of the European Commission and the [MPHASIS](#) project.

Download the [Commission Staff Working document on monitoring progress towards the objectives of the European Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion](#).

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► **MPHASIS: Czech Republic**[28/11/2008]

The Mphasis Czech Republic meeting took place on 24<sup>th</sup> October in Prague coordinated by City of Prague. There were 17 people at the meeting from different organisations – Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Czech Statistical Office, Office for Personal Data Protection, State Police, City of Prague, City of Brno, City of Ostrava and from the 4 the most important NGO's. Different systems of data collection were presented by the NGO's, municipalities and the Czech Statistical Office.

There were discussions about protecting the personal data of homeless people. Participants agreed to try and meet regularly in 2009 and cooperate on creating a single strategy to collect data on homelessness. There are three client monitoring systems in the Czech Republic and it is necessary to modify them to get comparable information. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs offered to present the Mphasis project at the International Social Services Conference in spring 2009 during the Czech Presidency.

The short report and documents of the meeting will be available on the [MPHASIS](#) website.

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► **MPHASIS: Ireland**[28/11/2008]

The Mphasis Ireland one-day meeting took place in Dublin on 7th November 2008. Co-ordinated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the meeting included representatives from a wide range of stakeholders in Ireland, including other government departments, Central Statistics Office, homelessness NGOs, local authorities, researchers, and the prison and probation service. Ireland's recently published new national homelessness strategy highlights the importance of data collection and evidence-based policies.

There are already a number of ways in which data on homelessness is collected in Ireland and the two largest cities, Dublin and Cork, also have directories of services and client recording systems operating. The meeting discussed priorities to help build on existing initiatives to improve data collection in the context of implementation of the homelessness strategy, including plans for a new national client database system. The data sub-group of the National Homeless Consultative Committee will be holding further discussions and identifying action to be taken. The national position paper and documents of the meeting will be available on the [MPHASIS](#) website.

► **Outcomes of the European Round Table on Social Inclusion**[28/11/2008]

FEANTSA took part in the European Round Table on Social Inclusion which took place in Marseille on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of October and which was reported on in [last month's Flash newsletter](#).

The Rapporteur-General, Fintan Farrell, Director of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), presented the outcomes that were taken from discussions between participants and the workshops that were held. These outcomes were related to the three pillars on active inclusion that are: guaranteed minimum income, a link to the labour market and access to quality services.

Concerning guaranteed minimum income, participants stated that this still did not exist in two Member States and also stated that it is important that the guaranteed minimum income in other Member States is adapted according to living conditions that exist within that country. They also emphasised the importance of improved links between services and labour income.

Participants emphasised the importance of lifelong learning and education and opportunities for quality employment. Also underlined was the necessity of personal contact with people entering the job market and regularly monitoring and following-up on their progress. Concerning access to quality services, it was concluded that it is necessary to interview service users about their needs to put in place effective services. Participants hope that recognition is given to the important role of the Social Services of General Interest (SSGI).

Participants recommend that Member States discuss and adopt national objectives to combat poverty and that they regularly give progress reports. In this respect, the European Commission is invited to set out guidelines in the way this might happen.

Numerous participants called for a European Consensus Conference on the theme of homelessness that would allow for the exchange of mutual learning and good practices. It would be a forum to promote effective tools for working, following France's example

For more information visit the [official web page](#).

► **Outcomes of the informal European Housing Ministers meeting**[28/11/2008]

The 17<sup>th</sup> European Union Housing Ministers' meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> November in Marseille, France, on the theme of 'Access to housing for persons with difficulties'.

Ministers' conclusions from the meeting include: that the European Social Protection Committee manages detailed studies in 2009 dedicated to housing exclusion and homelessness within the scope of the EU social protection and social inclusion strategy; that housing exclusion and homelessness are taken into account within the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion; that policies tackling housing exclusion must be developed within the framework of the European social inclusion strategy.

Ministers recommend that the Social Protection Committee develop housing indicators on homelessness and inadequate housing through transnational projects and EU-funded research. This work could include a series of quality indicators defining the concepts of "adequate" and "affordable" housing which should take into account national, regional and cultural differences.

Ministers also agreed that a new consensus conference on homelessness should be organised at European level to generate a shared understanding and assessment of the problem.

The next meeting of the Housing Ministers will be organised by Spain during the first half of 2010.

Download the [communiqué of the informal Housing Ministers' meeting](#).

► **Second forum on Social Services of General Interest in Europe**[28/11/2008]

Following on from the first forum that took place in Lisbon 2007, the second SSGI forum took place in Paris on the 28-29<sup>th</sup> October and was organised by the French Ministry for Labour, Labour Relations, and Family & Solidarity. All 27 Member States were there as well as members of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. NGO's and local authorities were also represented, including representatives from FEANTSA.

This was an opportunity for the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union to focus on three main points. Firstly, that SSGI are of interest to all Europeans – be they childcare, assistance to the elderly, employment assistance or social housing. Secondly, the specificity of SSGI at the European level – reaffirming the annexing of a protocol on SSGI in the Lisbon Treaty giving a “large power of discretion” to national, regional and local authorities in this “essential role”. It also underlines the necessity to guarantee high-quality services ensuring that there is universal access to SSGI.

And thirdly, the progression of SSGI – emphasising that there was progress still to be made in clarifying the legal framework applicable to SSGI and in the establishment of a European framework for their quality. All Member States agreed that this requirement is necessary and that the exchange of best practices would be very useful.

The different elements that may constitute a roadmap for the way forward on SSGI will be sent by the Presidency to all Member States, the European Commission and European Parliament. The Presidency also proposed that the forum on SSGI should be institutionalised and that one forum should be held every two years so debate could continue.

Visit the [conference webpage](#) for more information.

► **Study on social protection and inclusion in the Western Balkans**[28/11/2008]

The aim of this series of studies is to inform people about the process of accession for a number of countries from the Balkans such as, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Kosovo under UNSC Resolution 1244/99 in the area of social inclusion and protection. These studies provide an analysis of the social protection systems, the extent and pattern of social exclusion and poverty and the plans to reform the pension and healthcare systems in each country.

Download [full text for Albania](#).

Download [full text for Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).

Download [full text for Montenegro](#).

Download [full text for Serbia](#).

## News from our Members

► **Cáritas and Faciam: Launch a new campaign focusing on those in poverty**[28/11/2008]

FEANTSA Spain, Cáritas and Faciam, together with the Ministry of Education, Social Affairs and Sport have launched a new campaign called ‘No tener hogar significa mucho más que estar sin techo’ (‘Not having a home means more than not having a roof’).

The launch of the campaign coincided with the annual day for people who are homeless on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. There are approximately 30,000 men and women who are homeless in Spain, and according to official government statistics from 2001, there are 1,447,880 families who live in slum dwellings and inadequate housing in the country. In Andalucía, the situation has worsened as Cáritas has received increasing demands for help from people families facing eviction, in need of clothing for their children and who cannot pay their mortgage. Till recently, these people have not needed assistance from the charity.

Statistics from Cáritas say that 18.5% of the Spanish population lived in poverty before the economic downturn. The price of apartments has risen 107% in the last seven years whilst the basic salary has been reduced by 34% during the same period, increasing the risk of people falling into poverty.

► **Focus Ireland: Campaign launched calling for the statutory right to aftercare**[28/11/2008]

The Irish charity, Focus Ireland, has launched a campaign calling for legislative changes that will ensure facilities for young people leaving State care and making the transition to independent leaving, rather than turning to drugs or sleeping rough on the streets.

There are more than 5,000 children in State care today, with 80% in foster care and the remainder in children's residential centres. Under the current laws, once a young person turns 18, the State has no obligation to provide aftercare. Children's rights advocates say such a statutory right to aftercare would ensure support for challenged youths. Focus Ireland's founder, Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, said the State had a "moral duty" to provide aftercare to protect vulnerable young people. "At the end of the day, this will prove to be a sound investment in the parents of our future generations".

The need for accommodation for young people leaving State care was highlighted in the organisation's research in 2000 called 'Left Out On Their Own'. This research revealed that nearly two-thirds of those leaving Health Board care experienced homelessness within the first two years of their leaving.

Research shows that structured support and accommodation can help prevent people from becoming homeless and also getting sucked into crime and addiction problems after leaving care. The organisation has produced a magazine outlining the case for a right to aftercare that includes the story of former Irish international football player, Paul McGrath, who was himself in care for 11 years.

For more information, contact Roughan McNamara ([Roughan@focusireland.ie](mailto:Roughan@focusireland.ie))

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► **Homeless Link: Calls for an end to rough sleeping by 2012**[28/11/2008]

UK organisation, Homeless Link, has called for cross-party support to end rough sleeping in the country by 2012, the year that London will host the Olympic Games.

The organisation believes there are 10 key things to happen in order for this to happen. This includes a right to shelter, giving everyone an alternative to a night on the streets, ensuring that people discharged from hospitals, prisons and from the army do not end up homeless, as well as moving people on from hostels as soon as they are ready to do so. There are currently 45% of residents that are ready to leave hostels but who have no suitable housing to go to.

Another point is a "safety net for migrants" to ensure that, "everyone has an appropriate welfare safety net for shelter and food, regardless of their status". There is also importance placed on conducting street counts in every area to ensure accurate statistical information.

Says Jenny Edwards, Chief Executive of Homeless Link, "We have the chance to lead the world in one of the most tangible areas of social justice...The global spotlight will be on London from now on".

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► **Shelter Scotland: celebrates its 40th anniversary**[28/11/2008]

The homelessness charity Shelter Scotland is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and is also calling on Scotland to lead the world in ending homelessness by 2012. One of their achievements has been playing a significant role in the multi-agency Homelessness Task Force, which has made real progress in ending homelessness in Scotland by 2012.

Local authorities will now have to find permanent housing for all households who are in a situation of homelessness through no fault of their own. The answer to the homelessness problem has traditionally been dealt with in Scotland through social rented housing; 26.5% of the country's housing stock is counted as social housing which means that Scotland has a higher proportion of social housing than the rest of the UK.

The 2008 annual report of the Homelessness Monitoring Group shows the progress made by Scottish local authorities towards meeting the 2012 target of housing 100% of unintentionally homeless households. As at 2006/7, on average, Scottish local authorities were housing 77% of such cases. The 2012 target seems achievable by gradually expanding the legal safety net by just less than five percentage points per year.

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► **Tyneside Cyrenians: Named UK charity of the year**[28/11/2008]

Tyneside Cyrenians , has been named UK Charity of the Year at the prestigious 2008 UK Charity Times Awards ceremony in London. The innovative North East based charity , which supports vulnerable , excluded and disadvantaged people , prevailed against six other charities , to take the award.

The judges' feedback on Tyneside Cyrenians was, "This is a great achievement from an organisation leading the way in homelessness, working with a clear vision, a wider civil society outlook, while at the same time working on a very tight budget".

Receiving the award, Stephen Bell, Chief Executive of Tyneside Cyrenians, said:

"This is an outstanding achievement for Tyneside Cyrenians. The Charity Times' Awards are the flagship for the charitable and voluntary sector. We are proud and delighted that Tyneside Cyrenians is recognised as the number one charity in the UK - both as the leading homelessness charity and as the best charity across all sectors".

'Changing lives , building futures', the Tyneside Cyrenians philosophy is embedded throughout the entire organisation which operates a total acceptance policy. Taking an integrated approach the Charity provides support to over 2 ,000 people each year through outreach , emergency accommodation, a drop-in day centre , drug and alcohol interventions , specialist women's work as well as skills training and employment. Currently 30% of Tyneside Cyrenians employees have previously faced issues related to homelessness or addiction. This proportion is groundbreaking and unprecedented within the sector in the UK.

## Homelessness in the Headlines

### ► **Belgium: Growing demand for food banks**[28/11/2008]

According to figures recently release by the Food Bank in Belgium, the number of people asking for food aid has risen by 35% in the last 10 years. There are now 150.000 people in Belgium who go to food banks for help, a number that has doubled since the beginning of the 1990's.

Why the increase? Hugues-Olivier Hubert and Céline Nieuwenhuis, researchers at the 'Fédération des Centres de service social' (FCSS) explain that social benefits for a person living alone amount to 711.56 euro per month, which is well below the poverty index of 860 euro per person. In fact, a seventh of the Belgian population lives below the poverty line.

The economic crisis and the steady rise in food and heating prices have also led to more and more people struggling to make ends meet. Employment is also more insecure, which has had a real impact on people's lives. The FCSS is calling for greater public funding of food banks with improved training of staff and volunteers. But laments Charles Lejeune, secretary general of the FCSS, "the public authorities see food aid as humanitarian aid. They're not in much of a hurry to intervene in the budgets".

### ► **Germany: New homelessness statistics report 2004 – 2006** [28/11/2008]

German organisation working on homelessness, and FEANTSA member, BAGW, recently published the latest statistics report on homelessness in Germany, which covers the period 2004 – 2006. As there is no national data collection on homelessness in Germany, the report provides estimates for the number of homeless people and their profiles. The BAGW estimates are based on data collected through a software system that brings together data from different homeless services across Germany in one central interface. The report covers a three year period in order to demonstrate changes over time and already includes data demonstrating the impact of recent welfare reforms in Germany (the so-called Hartz-reforms).

According to the report, the number of homeless people in Germany in 2006 was approximately 254,000 persons (including homeless returned settlers from former German settlements (*Aussiedler*) 265,000). Of these, approximately 132,000 are single homeless people and approximately 122,000 are from multi-person households. Of the 254,000 people experiencing homelessness, approximately 25% are women (64,000) and 11 % (28,000) are children and young people.

The report also includes data on the social situation of people who are homeless as well as their profiles regarding employment, income, housing, health, relationship and when leaving homeless service provision.

The full report is available for download on the [BAGW website](#) (in German only).

### ► **Germany: Online game on homelessness draws criticism**[28/11/2008]

A German online game, called 'Pennergame', has come under fire for inciting prejudice against people who are homeless. 'Penner' is the German word for 'bum' or 'hobo'.

The point of Pennergame is to advance from being a homeless person on the streets of Hamburg to owning a mansion in the northern German city's wealthy Blankenese district. Players of the game are told: "Learn to read and write so that you can finally prop up signs in front of yourself to get more attention. Buy a dog to attract sympathy. Become a con artist and steal watches, wallets and jewels from other people".

Birgit Mueller, editor-in-chief of the Hamburg homeless newspaper, '*Hinz und Kunzt*', calls the game "tasteless". She says the name of the game is, "pretty hardcore", adding that, "I am shocked that the inventors are still pretty young and they have wheeled out every cliché that there is, as well as adding a few of their own to the standard ones".

PR spokesperson for Flabflut (the company that produces the game), Steffen Peuckert, says the game has drawn many young people's attention towards homelessness. "The users' feedback has been completely positive in this respect. We've had e-mails from people saying that they have started noticing homeless people more...Some have even asked where they can send their donations".

#### ► **Homeless World Cup approaching**[28/11/2008]

The countdown to the Melbourne 2008 Homeless World Cup is under way as the Australian city prepares to welcome teams from 56 nations for the Homeless World Cup. This year women will be competing for the first time.

The sporting event will run from 1-7 December at Melbourne's Federation Square and Birrarung Marr. This tournament uses soccer as a catalyst to improve the lives of people who are homeless and to create awareness about the global problem of homelessness to governments, the media and the public. The inaugural Homeless World Cup kicked off in Graz, Austria with 18 nations. Since then it has taken place in Gothenburg, Sweden (2004); Edinburgh, Scotland (2005); Cape Town, South Africa (2006); and Copenhagen, Denmark (2007). The 2009 World Cup will take place in Milan, Italy.

The first women's cup will include eight nations and 80 women from Cameroon, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Uganda, Zambia, Liberia and Paraguay. The women's teams will also take part in a workshop program including soccer coaching and leadership development.

#### ► **Italy: Concern about draft security law which foresees a national homeless register**[28/11/2008]

The Italian government has recently decided to set up a national homeless register while reviewing a 1954 law on domestic security. The reason behind the national register appears to be unclear, while the concrete implementation of such a measure should be further defined by an additional law to be adopted in the coming months. Also, the draft law contains an article, which would allow local authorities to de-register residents from council records if the place they live in fails to comply with sanitary requirements.

Knowing the importance of being in the records to exercise a variety of fundamental rights, Italian organisation working for the homeless, and FEANTSA member, fioPSD, raises concerns about the law and the impact it might have on the social integration of homeless people and of other vulnerable groups. fioPSD will monitor the development of the situation. To read more about it, see the [fioPSD press release](#) issued on 7th November 2008 (in Italian) or join the [fioPSD group](#) on Facebook.

#### ► **Romania: Housing is essential in tackling extreme poverty**[28/11/2008]

A Romanian architect and activist involved in Roma communities, claims Roma are severely overlooked by policy makers, and is calling for a national policy in Romania to tackle the precarious housing conditions that Roma communities live in. He says, "The communities are small and very well hidden...It is almost like they do not exist for the rest of society".

The architect, Catalin Berescu, says, "One cannot suffice by providing education and then sending a child back to a single-room house, sleeping with his seven brothers in the same bed, without water or electricity". He continues, stating that housing is a precondition for employment for the Roma.

Berescu would like to see a national policy that integrates housing with employment, health and education, whereby community structures and skills are created and environmental threats eliminated. "One should never, absolutely never, start with housing", he says, "Just producing housing and parachuting them onto a piece of land does not work".

The country's Prime Minister, Calin Popescu-Tariceanu, announced a package of new measures on 12<sup>th</sup> November including earmarking 200 million euro for social housing and doubling housing appropriations for 2009.

Romanian homelessness organisation and FEANTSA member, Casa Iona, state that whilst the government's acknowledgement concerning the desperate need for affordable housing is encouraging, the amount of money proposed is too late and insufficient to meet the growing demand. A vast number of Romanians bought their homes from the urban municipalities for a symbolic price in the early 1990's. Unfortunately, the majority of owner-occupiers are unable to maintain the buildings in which they live. There is a huge shortage of adequate housing which needs to be addressed

and Casa Iona believes that this will only be achieved through the private construction market.

► **UK: Government pledges to end rough sleeping** [28/11/2008]

On 18<sup>th</sup> November the Communities and Local Government department launched a 15-point strategy, called 'No One Left Out – Communities to end rough sleeping', as part of it's £200 million plan to end rough sleeping in four years.

The strategy includes measures to support single people at risk of homelessness, and funding and assistance to expand street rescue teams run by charities. New approaches to counting rough sleepers will also be introduced in order to help authorities keep track of people sleeping rough, stating that, "The counts will be as much focused on planning action for individuals as counting people".

It also outlines plans for further coordination and partnership between health and social care workers, while local authorities will be asked to improve interventions that prevent rough sleeping, including strengthening their housing options.

Junior Housing Minister, Iain Wright, said: "The government target in 1998 was to reduce rough sleeping by two thirds and we achieved that four years early, but we want to go further. This strategy emphasises three things – prevention, partnerships, and personalised, comprehensive services".

However, there are also some concerns. Shelter Chief Executive, Adam Sampson, says: "It's not just about bringing down numbers and getting people off the streets; it's about providing the appropriate accommodation and support over the long term to enable people to rebuild their lives". Adding that, in order to really end rough sleeping, the government "must significantly increase the social housing supply".

The Liberal Democrats party has claimed that the commitment to end rough sleeping by 2012 is "meaningless". The party's Housing spokesperson, Sarah Teather, said: "The new target is meaningless unless it is based on reliable information rather than on the discredited street counts".

Charles Fraser, Chief Executive of London homelessness charity St Mungo's, said the strategy, "does not address the issue of people with poor mental health sleeping rough".

Download ['No One Left Out – Communities ending rough sleeping'](#).

► **UK: Unemployment will cause "homelessness time bomb"**[28/11/2008]

According to a study carried out by Yougov for the charity Crisis, a third of the British public are worried that they might lose their jobs due to the financial crisis.

The Confederation of British Industry warned on 17<sup>th</sup> November that unemployment could rise to nearly 3 million by the middle of 2010. According to housing experts, 5 million people will be queuing for a council house by 2010. The Local Government Association says that the economic downturn and a surge in home repossessions will force an extra million people on to waiting lists for social housing.

Leslie Morphy, Chief Executive of Crisis, said, "Recent job losses are creating a homelessness time bomb. The government must accelerate the building of new social housing and at the same time widen the safety net of support for those facing homelessness".

The charity's research shows that almost a quarter of adults without children would turn to the local authority for help if facing homelessness. Crisis has said that this would be a "misplaced expectation" as local authorities only have a duty to house people with priority need, and single people and couples without children would be unlikely to qualify.

## News from the United Nations

► **World Health Organisation: Social inequalities have an impact on health conditions** [28/11/2008]

An International Conference on health equity was held in London on 6-7 November 2008, and follows the publication of a WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health report entitled "Closing the Gap in a Generation: Health Equity through Action on the Social Determinants of Health." The report reveals that social justice affects people's health. Hosted by the Secretary of State for Health, the Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson MP, the conference gathered about 300 delegates coming from around the world and allowed participants to discuss the recommendations of the report.

The full report is available on the [WHO web site](#).

Information relating to the conference, including videos of relevant speeches, can be found on the [UK Department of Health web site](#).

## Announcements

### ► **Scottish Homelessness Involvement and Empowerment Network launched**[28/11/2008]

The Scottish government, in partnership with the Glasgow Homelessness Network (GHN), is launching a new initiative on service user involvement: the Scottish Homelessness Involvement and Empowerment Network (SHIEN).

The aim of this network is to support, share, and promote good practice in service user involvement across Scotland at all levels within homelessness services. It is for all agencies, organisations, and individuals interested in involving service users. GHN is running 3 launch seminars, running between 10am and 1pm and finishing with a networking lunch, taking place in:

Aberdeen – 3<sup>rd</sup> December, Aberdeen Foyer training and Conference Centre.

Glasgow – 8<sup>th</sup> December, Parish Halls.

Edinburgh – 16<sup>th</sup> December, City Chambers Business Centre.

These seminars are for all professionals within the homelessness sector, or related, with an interest in service user involvement and the service users they support. To find out more about the seminar and how to register, please download the invitation below.

[SHIEN launch invitation](#).

## Publications

### ► **France – National Observatory on Poverty and Social Exclusion report 2007-2008** [28/11/2008]

This report describes the worsening situation in France concerning poverty and social exclusion, as well as highlighting the differences in wealth between certain regions within the country. The report focuses on poverty and social exclusion following three themes: minimum social benefits, employment and housing.

The [National Observatory on Poverty and Social Exclusion report 2007-2008](#) (in French).

### ► **France – RMI, l'état des lieux: 1988-2008**[28/11/2008]

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the French 'Revenu Minimum d'Insertion' (RMI), the guaranteed minimum benefits given to people with no other source of income. In this book, authors Michèle Lelièvre and Emmanuelle Nauze-Fichet, examine the history and effectiveness of this important piece of legislation within French social protection policy.

To buy the book (in French), visit <http://www.alternatives-economiques.fr/>

### ► **UK – A guide to publications on homelessness in Northern Ireland 2008**[28/11/2008]

This is the first time the main sources of current and relevant information for those working in the area of homelessness across Northern Ireland have been consolidated in one publication.

This is to be an 'evolving document' with sections of the guide to be modified and new sections added as issues vary and are identified.

[Northern Ireland Resource Guide 2008](#).

### ► **UK – Ending homelessness: From Vision to Action**[28/11/2008]

Homeless Link has launched their campaign entitled 'From Vision to Action', which is also the name of their first action document that sets out how they hope to end homelessness.

[Homeless Link: From Vision to Action.](#)



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This programme was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

To that effect, PROGRESS purports at:

- providing analysis and policy advice on employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

For more information see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html)

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